

# Oregon's Employment First Two-Year Action Plan: 2026-27

## Purpose

Advance competitive integrated employment for people with I/DD by convening three targeted workgroups to develop actionable, cross-agency recommendations to implement over the first two years of this four-year strategic plan.

## Priority 1: State as a Model Employer (SAME)

### Goal

Strengthen Oregon's role as a model employer of people with I/DD.

### Strategy: SAME Workgroup

Convene a cross-agency SAME workgroup to:

1. Identify barriers and opportunities in state hiring, onboarding, and retention
2. Recommend standardized inclusive hiring practices and supports
3. Propose scalable pathways (e.g., internships, permanent positions)
4. Identify opportunities to implement and expand toolkit developed by Oregon's Council for Developmental Disabilities Services.
5. Develop metrics and accountability framework for statewide adoption

### Deliverable (by February 2027)

A set of implementable policy, practice, and data recommendations for statewide SAME expansion.

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## **Priority 2: Benefits Counseling Access and Integration**

### **Goal**

Ensure individuals can make informed decisions about work and benefits.

### **Strategy: Benefits Counseling Workgroup**

Convene cross-system partners to:

1. Assess current capacity, access gaps, and referral pathways
2. Recommend standards for when and how benefits counseling is delivered
3. Identify strategies to expand provider capacity and statewide access
4. Implement semi-annual training for benefits counselors on Oregon-specific benefits to complement the national credentialing (Medicaid, HUDD, SNAP, TANF, Workers Comp, Unemployment Insurance).

### **Deliverable (by February 2027)**

A coordinated set of recommendations to improve access, consistency, and integration of benefits counseling statewide. Procedures for Oregon-specific credentialing.

## Priority 3: Peer Mentoring Services COP

### Goal:

Test and scale peer mentoring as a support for employment success.

### Strategy: Peer Mentoring Workgroup

Convene partners, including people with lived experience, to:

1. Design and implement a COP to establish a model of best practice for peer mentoring in employment services
2. Define roles, qualifications, and training for peer mentors
3. Identify service delivery settings (e.g., pre-employment, job retention)
4. Recommend funding, service definitions, and evaluation approach
5. Evaluate waiver updates that may be needed

### Deliverable (by June 2027):

Develop design and implementation recommendations, including scalable strategy.